GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CIVIL AVIATION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2092
ANSWERED ON:10.03.2016
Safety Lapses in Air India Operations
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Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has found / noticed serious safety lapses in Air India"s operations. if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether these lapses has resulted in downgrading of India"s flight safety ratings by Federal Aviation Agency (FAA), if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the major findings of DGCA and FAA in this regard along with the corrective measures taken / being taken by the Government thereon?

Answer

Minister of State in the Ministry of CIVIL AVIATION
(Dr Mahesh Sharma)

(a) As part of the Annual Surveillance Programme, DGCA conducts surveillance of all approved organizations (airlines, aerodrome operators, maintenance organizations) including Air India to ensure that they continue to adhere to the regulatory requirements against which these
organizations have been approved. Findings resulting from these surveillance are brought to the notice of the concerned organization for corrective action.

(b) No. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) conducted an audit of India in December 2012 which resulted in identification of the Significant Safety Concerns in the areas of operations and airworthiness not connected with one particular airline. These concerns were addressed by DGCA and resolved by August 2013.

Based on the identification of the Significant Safety Concerns by ICAO, FAA raised concerns on the safety oversight capability of DGCA and audited DGCA under the "International Aviation Safety Assessment Programme" (IASA) in September 2013 and came again in December 2013 to confirm the actions taken by DGCA to address the findings raised by FAA in September 2013. On 31st January, 2014, FAA informed DGCA that India has been placed in Category 2. The downgrade to Category 2 means that the country"s safety oversight system is lacking and does not meet minimum standards laid down by ICAO.

Based on the FAA carrying out a reassessment of DGCA in December 2014, the FAA restored India"s IASA Category 1 status in April 2015.

(c) The main finding which led to the downgrade was lack of sufficient number of flight operations inspectors in DGCA. In order to address the finding, Government, in January 2014, approved 75 positions of regular FOIs in DGCA of which 54 full time FOIs have been hired in DGCA. These FOIs are qualified and cover all the types of aircraft operated by
scheduled air operators.